

Soldiers *Online*



SGLI data is also available online at www.insurance.va.gov/.

Fort McCoy, Wis.

SGLI Increases to \$250,000

THE top rate of Servicemember's Group Life Insurance automatically increased to \$250,000 effective April 1. SGLI is open to active or reserve-component servicemembers.

Current premium payments of 80 cents per \$10,000 of coverage will continue, resulting in an additional \$4 SGLI premium being withheld from each member's pay. Premiums are automatically deducted from military pay. For servicemembers wanting the full increased coverage (\$250,000), no action is necessary.

However, any servicemember who wants a reduced amount of coverage or no coverage must prepare a new Servicemembers Group Life Insurance Election and Certificate 8286 form. The form must be prepared, signed, dated and submitted no earlier than April 1 and no later than April 30.

Any requests for reduced coverage or no coverage received during this period will

result in a refund of any over-collection of the premium in the month of April.

The April 1 to April 30 time frame is critical. Request forms dated and received after April 30 will be processed to reduce the coverage or stop the coverage, effective in May 2001, but no refunds of the maximum premium withheld for the month of April 2001 will be made.

Soldiers should direct SGLI questions to their unit personnel offices. — *Defense Finance and Accounting Service*

Washington, D.C.

More RC Captains Eligible for Back Pay

ABOUT 5,600 more reserve-component captains may be eligible for back pay and adjustment of their dates of rank.

The Army is beginning the third phase of a program to review records of officers affected by an oversight it made when implementing the Reserve Officer Personnel Management Act, or ROPMA.

Under Phase III of the program, Army National Guard and

Army Reserve captains selected by promotion boards that convened between November 1999 and February 2000 are asked to apply for adjusted dates of rank. More than 1,600 may be eligible, under Phase III, for nine months to a year of back pay. They said eligible officers should have received packets of instructions in the mail by mid-March.

The date-of-rank review stems from an oversight that occurred when the Army implemented revised promotion policies under ROPMA, officials said. Before October 1996, reserve-component officers generally served three years as a second lieutenant, then four as a first lieutenant before being promoted to captain.

However, under ROPMA, reserve-component officers now generally serve two years as second lieutenants and five as first lieutenants, said LTC Kenneth E. Musser of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

So the Army may adjust the date of rank for these officers, Musser said. But only those

captains who apply will have their dates of rank adjusted, he emphasized. The completed application forms and all requested documentation should be mailed to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records in Washington, D.C.

Eligible officers who have delayed applying for date-of-rank adjustments under the first two phases of the program are also encouraged to submit their packets now, Musser said.

The first phase covered captains selected by promotion boards that convened from November 1997 through March 1998, and phase II affected captains who were promoted by boards that met from November 1998 through February 1999.

The program covers National Guard and Army Reserve officers on the Army Promotion List, and the Army Medical Department and Chaplain promotion competitive categories.

The program applies only to officers who were first-time selects after having their promotion consideration delayed one year, Musser said.

News for Contributors

Writing for Soldiers Magazine

SOLDIERS needs your help to inform our readership of local events of interest to the larger Army audience, and we're providing some resources to help you through the ideas and preparation process.

First, visit **Soldiers Online**, at www.dtic.mil/soldiers, to view a library of back issues and download a copy of our Soldiers Style Guide. These resources will explain the magazine's mission, provide examples from writers and photographers who have successfully published articles in **Soldiers**, and help you further focus your story to fit our audience.

Then watch for a copy of our May issue for in-depth information on how to develop your ideas, develop photographic support for your stories, and work with **Soldiers** staff to explain your unit's mission or announce coming events to the larger Army audience. — *Gil High*



Armywide

Celebrate Your Military Child

APRIL is the "Month of the Military Child." Various events are planned Armywide.

Check with local youth services staff for information about special events at your installation. — *Community & Family Support Center*

Officers who believe they are eligible under the third phase of this program and who did not receive their application packet by April 1 should contact: Office of Promotions (Reserve Components), ATTN: TAPC-MSL-N (DOR), 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis,

MO, 63132-5200.

The last phase of the program, which will consider officers whose first-time consideration was delayed to the November 2000 through March 2001 boards, is scheduled for later this year. — *ARNEWS*

Health News

Troops in Europe Safe From "Mad Cow" Disease

IF they are following prudent guidelines, U.S. service members and their families living in Europe need not fear the human derivative of the so-called "mad cow" disease, said Department of Defense veterinary officials.

A traveler's advisory issued by the Centers for Disease Control for U.S. citizens in Europe notes that "the relative risk of becoming infected with BSE is very small, if it exists at all," said COL Scott Severin, deputy director of DOD's Veterinary Service Activity. "BSE" is short for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or what the media and public had dubbed "mad cow" disease, following outbreaks of the disease in the United Kingdom, he said.

"The beef our service members are eating in the dining facilities comes from the United States," Severin said. "The meats being sold by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service through the concessions and shoppettes or through the commissaries are all from the United States or from countries outside Europe where there's no evidence of BSE."

He said DOD took steps in March 2000 to ban the procurement for sale of European-origin ruminant (beef, veal, mutton and lamb) meat and meat products containing them, for consumption by U.S. service members in Europe.

Severin said the CDC's guidance to Americans who eat on the European economy and are concerned about exposure to BSE is to stay away from beef and beef products. "There is no risk associated with eating pork, poultry, milk or dairy products," he said. — *American Force Press Service*

Germany

"Les Misérables" Premieres in USAREUR

THE first overseas American community theater production of the acclaimed musical "Les Misérables" will be staged in Heidelberg, Germany.

Dane Winters, artistic director of the 414th Base Support Battalion's Roadside Theatre, said New York City-based Music Theater International specifically chose the Heidelberg program based on the reputation of Army entertainment theater programs. "I'm thrilled. This is a prestigious honor in the theater world," he said.

MTI's Michael McDonough said his company, the copyright agent chosen to license performances of "Les Misérables" in various categories of theaters worldwide, chose the Roadside Theatre because of

the "quality and caliber of their productions. We welcome the opportunity to work with the Army's theater team."

Winters said the epic tale of the fugitive Jean Valjean, set against the backdrop of the French Revolution, will be a challenge to stage in the confines of the small theater. "Our approach is going to be slightly cinemagraphic, focusing on each episode to make it look rich and detailed," he said.

Performances are scheduled for May and June. To follow the progress of the production and for more information, visit the Roadside Theatre home page at www.roadside-theater.com. For more information about Army entertainment programs, visit www.armymwr.com. — *U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center Public Affairs Office*



The Roadside Theater in Heidelberg will be the first overseas American community theater to present "Les Misérables."

Fort Lee, Va.

Army Women Dedicate Museum

THE memories and memorabilia of American Army women will soon have a new home.

The U.S. Army Women's Museum dedication at 2 p.m. on May 11 is one of the events of the Army Women's Reunion at Fort Lee, Va., to be held May 9 through 13.

The former Women's Army Corps Museum ceased operations with the closing of Fort McClellan, Ala. Fort Lee was chosen as the site of the new museum because of the post's significant historical ties to the WAC. Fort Lee was the home of the First Regular Army WAC Training Center and WAC School from 1948 to 1954.

The museum was named the U.S. Army Women's Museum to represent all women who have served in the Army from the Revolutionary War to the present.

The museum contains artifacts, archives, videos and 40 exhibits to help visitors learn of women's struggles, persistence, patience and will to prevail in the face of opposition as they served alongside their male counterparts in defense

of our country.

For more information, contact Sharon Wright at the Fort Lee Public Affairs Office at (804) 734-4559. — *Fort Lee PAO*

Washington

The Facts on Depleted Uranium

A U.S. Army medical expert has said that depleted uranium could not have caused leukemia in allied troops who served in Kosovo.

COL Eric Daxon, the DU consultant to the Army surgeon general, recently told NATO officials that there is no link between depleted uranium munitions and leukemia.

Daxon briefed the military medical chiefs from each of the NATO nations, telling them there is no evidence that dust from expended DU munitions causes cancer or any other health problems. He said 35 scientific studies back that up.

Daxon said the incidence of leukemia among Italian soldiers who served in the Balkans is no higher than that in the general population.

DU is actually 40 percent less radioactive than uranium found in the natural environment, he said.

Daxon, who holds a doctorate in radiation hygiene and a master's degree in nuclear engineering, is making it his business to dispel myths about the dangers of depleted uranium.

He said the false link between DU and leukemia began with a report issued in Iraq two years ago.

"If you read the Iraqi report,

it's just not scientifically valid," Daxon said. He pointed to studies by the National Academy of Sciences that show no evidence of an increase in leukemia due to uranium exposure.

But the Iraqi report has been cited by some to try to link DU ammunitions used in Kosovo to leukemia in allied soldiers there, Daxon said.

"I cannot understand from

Job Sites

Job Hunters Turn to DOD's Transportal Website

IF you're a soldier heading back to civilian life, DOD wants to help you find a job.

DOD Transportal, the department's new website, at www.dodtransportal.org, offers transition assistance to those returning to civilian life.

"Transportal is designed to be the service member's doorway to Internet transition and job assistance information," said Ollie M. Smith, Transition Assistance Program director in DOD's Office of Educational Opportunity.

"Transportal complements the assistance provided by military transition-assistance program managers," Smith said. "People still need to visit their local transition assistance office for pre-separation counseling. This is usually part of their normal outprocessing procedures."

The DOD Transition Assistance teams work with the Labor Department and Department of Veterans Affairs to provide counseling, training, workshops, briefings and guidance on the benefits and services available to veterans.

Transportal includes a list of the locations and phone numbers of the 212 Transition Assistance Offices worldwide as well as links to related websites.

The site also features a section titled "Your Next Career."

It includes a mini-course on conducting a successful job search and writing winning resumes. Another mini-course provides instruction on using the Internet to find a job, how to create electronic resumes and avoid Internet scams.

Transportal provides links to job search websites that track up to 1.5 million job listings, to 100 corporate recruiting sites, and to state job websites. You can also post your resume for employers to view. A suggested reading list of job search resources is also included.

The DOD site is particularly helpful to service members stationed overseas, Smith said. "Without easy access to newspapers and other sources of information on job opportunities in the United States, they must rely on the Internet to find and compete for jobs." — *AFPS*



The new U.S. Army Women's Museum, to be dedicated on May 11, will represent all women who have served in the Army.

a scientific medical point of view what the furor is over this safe, effective material," he said.

Depleted uranium is used in armor-piercing munitions fired by tanks and some aircraft. It's also a component of the M-1 Abrams armor. The metal's density — one-and-a-half times the density of lead — makes it an effective armor plating for combat vehicles. Also, DU reportedly has self-sharpening characteristics when used as a munition.

But only those in or near armored vehicles at the time they are struck may internalize DU in excess of safety standards, Daxon said.

Daxon said maintenance personnel who routinely work inside struck vehicles are advised to wear protective gear. But he added that the precautions are not just for DU, but should be taken because a number of toxic substances — such as Benzene and burnt plastics — might be present.

Daxon said there's no rea-

son to be afraid of depleted uranium — unless you're the enemy.

"It's tactically a significant advantage," to use DU instead of tungsten in armor-piercing rounds, Daxon said. M1 Abrams rounds with DU can effectively engage targets at 3,000 meters, he said, adding that tungsten rounds fired by the Iraqis in the Gulf War were only effective at about 2,000 meters. — **ARNEWS**

San Antonio, Texas

Fifth Army Needs Trainers

AS the Army Reserve takes on more of the Army's warfighting mission, it needs more soldiers qualified to be observer controller/trainers on a part-time basis at training support battalions. These units, composed of active and Reserve soldiers, support 21 states west of the Mississippi River. Soldiers should be branch-qualified



MSG Don Thomas

Fifth Army is looking for NCOs and officers to serve as observer controller/trainers in each of its training-support divisions.

majors, captains, sergeants first class or staff sergeants.

"We have about 50 OC/T teams in each of our two training support divisions. Each team has about 18 individuals, mostly Reservists. We're experiencing a shortage in most of those teams," said Ray De Hoyos of Fifth Army's Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Training at Fort Sam Houston.

The shortages are excellent opportunities for prior service NCOs and officers to get "experience in how to train small units, to evaluate these units, and learn the art of the after-action review," De Hoyos said.

"This is a lot different from duty with line units," said CPT Greg Trnka, executive officer with 2nd Battalion, 393rd Infantry, 75th Division. "In this job, the Army has given me time to become a better soldier, then go out and apply it to other soldiers."

SSG Bobby Lewis, 3rd Bn., 395th Regiment, 2nd Brigade, said: "This job calls for soldiers who love to get down in the mud with troops. Ask an NCO what he thinks about training soldiers, and if his eyes light up and a smile comes across his face, that's the kind of soldier you're looking for as an OC/T."

For more information about OC/T opportunities in Fifth Army, call (210) 221-1216 or visit the Fifth Army website at www.5tharmy.army.mil. — **Fifth Army PAO**

Quantico, Va.

DOD Hosts Force Protection Demo

FORCE Protection Equipment Demonstration III will feature state-of-the-art commercial off-the-shelf systems May 8-10.

The demonstration for DOD, federal, state and local law enforcement and first responders, will feature blast protective barrier systems, personal protective equipment, explosive ordnance disposal equipment and night vision devices. It is hosted by the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, the Joint Staff, Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate, the National Institute of Justice and the Department of Energy.

People wishing to attend must register at <http://www.monmouth.army.mil/smc/pmpse/fped>. — **U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command PAO**

VI Award

Europe Unit Earns Inaugural VI Award

VISUAL Information Services-Europe employees have earned the first "Barbara Rosser Award for Excellence in Visual Information."

Klaus Zimmerman and Dennis McKell received the award for their videotape production "International Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol School." Zimmerman is a VIS-E videographer and editor, and McKell is a script writer, producer and narrator.

The video production was developed to highlight the continuing importance of the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol School program and its cost effectiveness in an ever-changing NATO environment. The video is also a recruiting tool and is used to brief senior allied leaders.

The award is named after the late Barbara Anne Rosser, who was the deputy director for visual information in the Office of the Director of Information Systems for Command, Control, Communications and Computers in the Pentagon. Rosser died of breast cancer in November 1991. — **ARNEWS**